

## THE BLOOMFIELD CITIZEN

A WEEKLY JOURNAL  
OF  
LOCAL NEWS AND HOME READING.  
PUBLISHED AT  
BLOOMFIELD, ESSEX CO., NEW JERSEY,  
BY THE  
Bloomfield Publishing Company.

\$2.00 a Year, in Advance. Single Copies, 5c.

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TRANSIENT NOTICES, FIFTY CENTS FOR EIGHT LINES,  
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MANENT RATES, APPLY AS ABOVE.

No one who remarks the advance of the  
cholera from India to Egypt, and thence to  
Trieste and London, needs to be told  
that this whole subject is of great im-  
portance. It may even happen that the  
disease may spread to America sooner  
than its usual rate. Therefore we have  
secured the preparation of a careful ar-  
ticle covering the historical and medical  
side of the question, and will publish it  
editorially next week.

While our subscription list is making  
steady progress, and our increasing cir-  
culation shows the interest of the commu-  
nity in the success of THE CITIZEN, we  
want to remind all our readers that we  
would like their names as subscribers. We  
are glad to find that each copy of the  
paper is read by the people in squads and  
detachments. But we are willing to  
print a larger edition, and so give our  
friends the benefit of elbow room in hot  
weather.

**THE COUNTY ASSESSORS.**  
We print elsewhere a full report of the  
proceedings of the County Board of As-  
sessment. It will be observed that the value  
of property has greatly increased during  
the past year, and that the rate of tax  
for county purposes this year is \$3  
on \$100, instead of \$2.50 on \$100 for 1882.  
This is equivalent to a reduction of one-  
fifth of the amount to be raised by the  
county. There is no tax this year for  
State purposes, and the poll tax is re-  
duced from \$4 to \$1, so the effect will be  
to lower the rate quite appreciably.

A careful examination of the returns of  
assessments for personal property will be  
interesting. Let us take the six townships  
which return the largest number  
of polls:

Township	Per- sonal	No. Polls	Popu- lation	Asses- ment	Asses- ment
East Orange	\$911,000	1,304	8,349	\$700	\$109
Bloomfield	467,000	950	5,748	490	85
Montclair	194,000	738	5,146	270	38
West Orange	228,000	648	3,385	240	66
South Orange	235,000	605	3,911	330	82
Caldwell	208,000	530	3,197	400	66

From the above table it will be seen  
that, so far as tax returns show, the av-  
erage wealth in personal property is great-  
est in East Orange, where the average is  
\$109 to every man, woman, and child,  
while it is lowest in Montclair, where the  
average is but \$38 to each inhabitant.  
This is about one-third as great as East  
Orange, less than half as much as Bloom-  
field, and but little more than half as  
much as Caldwell, whose population are  
more largely engaged in local interests  
and business than either of the other  
townships. When we remember the ex-  
travagant boasts and claims made by our  
Montclair friends as to their wealth and  
prosperity, we are compelled to conclude  
either that the assessor has not made  
the proper effort to discover what prop-  
erty is taxable, or that the wealth of which  
they boast has no existence outside of  
the imagination of those who find their  
chief pleasure in magnifying Montclair at  
the expense of the other townships.

**ANTI-USURY.**  
A correspondent in another column  
replies to some remark made by us last  
week upon the subject of interest.

It always gives us pleasure when we  
shoot at random to find we have hit the  
mark. When the enemy replies, your  
batteries are doing some execution.

We readily concede the value of the  
horse. His usefulness is beyond question.  
If "Anti-Usurer" is disposed to doubt it,  
and wishes to put his logic to the test,  
let him try to borrow one, say in the  
winter time, when his ear is charmed by  
the music of the sleigh bells. We will  
venture to say the owner will not loan or  
hire too cheap.

Yet even the horse is sometimes turned  
out to pasture, or money left in a deposit  
vault for safe keeping.

"Anti-Usury" constantly mistakes the  
exception for the rule. In doing the  
world's work, both horse and money are  
valuable. When needed, the borrower is

well satisfied to pay for their use, and the  
lender only receives a fair reward for the  
care and watchfulness by which he has  
held his property intact, and for the  
self-denial which he exercises in loaning  
it to another.

His services and self-denial should be  
repaid, as are those of the seller or the  
renter of a house or lands.

The Bible argument is as lame as that  
of the horse. Special laws were enacted  
for God's "peculiar people." By one of  
these all real property reverted to its  
original owners after a term of years—in  
the year of Jubilee. By another, interest  
was prohibited between one another.

Yet even the Jews were not forbidden  
to take interest or usury from the nations  
about them. In Deuteronomy xiii., 19,  
we read: "Unto a stranger thou mayest  
lend upon usury," usury meaning simply  
that which is paid for the "use" of a  
thing.

The New Testament passages are inde-  
cisive, since no opinion is expressed of the  
matter in question.

Oppression is wrong everywhere and  
always; extortion is forbidden by the  
laws of God and man; but the receiving  
of a proper interest is neither robbery nor  
extortion.

**STRIKES AND BROTHERHOODS.**

The great telegraphic strike, with all  
its incidents and results, brings forcibly  
forward the old problem of Capital and  
Labor. More representative forces could  
not be in battle than these two. The  
telegraphic fraternity, as a rule, are tol-  
erably well educated; and the average of  
real cultivation and thoughtfulness  
among them is very high. Their occupa-  
tion enlarges their minds. The infinite  
variety of messages which pass over the  
wires suggests a great deal which does  
not readily occur to other laboring classes.

Nor can one say that a telegraphic op-  
erator does not labor in the strictest sense.  
His ear must take in the sounds of the dots  
and dashes of the Morse alphabet, and  
his finger must "write" them with his  
key upon the flowing current of elec-  
tricity, and both of these operations must  
be not merely accurate, but swift. It is  
this swift and this hurry which wear  
hardest, upon those who are thus con-  
stantly employed during their working  
hours. Nervous force must be expended  
at a truly ruinous rate, to obtain the re-  
sults that are sought. Operators fre-  
quently suffer from affections of the  
fingers and of the forearm, and occasion-  
ally from obscure diseases of the brain  
and the mind, in consequence of the  
strain of their employment.

Hence, there is probably no class who  
are brought so immediately into contact  
with the higher phases of labor as are the  
telegraphic operators. And when we read  
their temperate and careful manifestoes,  
we are compelled to acknowledge that  
they do not lack good generalship and  
efficient organization. There was never a  
better planned "strike" in the history of  
the artisan world.

Opposite to these men stands an organ-  
ization, perfected on this continent as no-  
where else, a vast and huge entity, whose  
wires carry the thrill of contemporaneous  
life even in advance of the sun, annihilat-  
ing both space and time. From the great  
building at the corner of Dey Street and  
Broadway, as from the centre of a web,  
the lines run out to far Cathay and rich  
Peru and golden California and the stor-  
ied East. Here sits the giant—sometimes  
called a monopoly—who manages these  
majestic networks. Monopolies have their  
good side, and the waves of popular  
opinion eat away upon their prices and  
rates, so that it may be said of them that  
they are not absolutely insensible to the  
demands of their fellow men.

The issue is a sharp one, and there is no  
mediator that has yet been discovered,  
unless it be this same public opinion.  
Both parties desire it on their side. The  
striking telegraphers earnestly conciliate  
it; to them it means support, livelihood,  
justification. The companies plead their  
case before it, with an advantage given to  
them by reason of the inconvenience to  
which their patrons are subjected. Sup-  
pose, then, that we offset these issues.  
Here stands a demand for shorter hours  
and better pay, based on claims of griev-  
ance and of injustice. There fronts it a  
strong corporation, indispensable to the  
world, with millions of money and the op-  
portunity to immediately employ thou-  
sands of trained, and half-trained new  
operators. Is the result doubtful?

But there is another element to be ad-  
ded. This strike is manipulated by the  
"Knights of Labor," and it is of one fabric  
with all the other labor affiliations. At  
the whistle of a single operator, hundreds  
of men obey the Brotherhood and drop  
their work. They oppose one tyranny by  
submitting to another. The international  
banding of the various guilds and societies  
of craftsmen makes this particular strike  
a matter of moment to the iron-moulder  
and the cigar-maker as well as to the tel-  
egrapher. If ever there is to be an Arma-  
geddon, it would seem that it might come  
as between the combination of Capital  
and the combination of Labor.

There is much significance in the remark  
that sooner than suffer a disastrous strike  
manufacturers will succumb. But it is  
pretty well settled among manufacturers,  
now, that they must and will control  
their own business. And the yielding of  
individual laborers to the order for a  
"strike" is often followed by the greater  
evils of a "lock-out."

Shall workmen, therefore, not organize?  
We would not assert it; for they need to  
do so in mutual aid and protection and  
benefit. But the issue of this present  
strike will teach, as we hope, a final lesson

respecting the temperate use of such a  
combined action.

Should corporations yield to these de-  
mands and treat with these brotherhoods,  
acknowledging them as bodies who govern  
these workmen? We dare not say it, for  
then there would be a tyranny of the  
most dangerous sort—a tyranny of the  
weak, the prejudiced, and the wicked,  
into which has been also injected the  
black blood of foreign *athletism*. To us it  
seems that a recognition of the Brother-  
hood in such a relation would be the  
opening of a most dangerous door.

The present strike, like that of the  
freight-handlers, can only end, by the  
logic of fate, in one way. But if it secures  
substantial attention to real grievances,  
and is conducted without violence or  
lawlessness, it may prove the most val-  
uable precedent ever set in America—and  
for both parties.

**HAZARDOUS EXHIBITIONS.**

The recent reported drowning of Cap-  
tain Webb, the great swimmer, brings  
up the old problem of hazardous exhi-  
bitions. In his case no one but himself be-  
lieved that he had the ghost of a chance  
to survive the whirlpool rapids. The ho-  
tels and railroad companies at Niagara  
Falls refused to make money out of his  
risk—and in so doing they have set an  
example to be admired and to be exten-  
sively copied. We hold that it is the  
province of any municipality to step in  
and prevent acrobats, wild beast tamers,  
balloonists, and such like folk, from tak-  
ing their lives so rashly into their hands.  
Such a thing as the shooting of objects  
from the head or the fingers is always ob-  
jectionable and decidedly demoralizing.

This later civilization of ours looks  
back at the days of Rome with some con-  
tempt and disgust for their bloodthirsty  
cruelties. We remember when Trajan,  
who scarcely ranks as the worst of the  
Emperors, forced ten thousand prisoners  
and gladiators to contend in the arena,  
and that these desperate and bloody bat-  
tles for life went on for one hundred and  
twenty-three days. No wonder that  
Cicero criticised the sports of his time and  
that the Stoic philosophers gave their  
public condemnation to such practices.

They did not, apparently, find much  
fault when women turned successive somers-  
aults over swords fixed upright in the  
ground, or when slack-rope or tight-rope  
performers amused the throng. It was  
not until Christianity influenced legisla-  
tion that any real general resistance  
was made. Modern life, however, is re-  
newing the love of civil sport for which  
Rome in her decay was so conspicuous.

It would not be possible to naturalize  
in the United States the Spanish bull-  
fights; but we have dog-fights, and cock-  
fights, and man-fights. Even the duels  
have lately taken to a mild sort of pugil-  
ism. And certainly the exhibitions which  
involve danger of life and limb are not  
discouraged as they should be. The  
rivalry of professionals leads them to  
discard nets and appliances for safety,  
as the brakemen on some railroads re-  
fuse to take a stick instead of their hands  
in coupling cars. It is well known that  
there is a double motive to be met: the  
fear of being called cowardly, and the  
desire to be popular and successful.

It is at this point that our common  
sense has lately had a spasm of stepping in.  
The refusal to co-operate with the head-  
strong but gallant swimmer is about the  
first laurel which those who live upon the  
flotsam and jetsam of the great cataract  
have wrested from a sometimes in-  
dignant and always greatly plundered  
world. They wear it well, and may they  
wear it long!

But it ought to be understood that the  
law (and not mere private good judgment)  
should, everywhere and always, prevent  
such things as the perilous feats of Don-  
aldson, the fatal shot of Frank Frayne,  
the terrible tumble of the "human  
cannon-ball," and the useless sacrifice of  
Captain Webb. That skilled and tried  
swimmer might have helped his fellow  
men far along into ways of safety and  
active benevolence. But he chose to at-  
tempt the impossible, and there was no-  
body nigh to hinder, unless indeed—and  
alas for the *unlucky*!—this has been the  
most stupendous advertising scheme ever  
concocted. What a pity that these very  
exhibitions should have led us to doubt  
our fellow men!

**LITERARY MARKET REPORT:** Short stories  
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torials are firm; essays dull, sermons  
duller; French novels have a downward  
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